

Dated: December 29, 1999.

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*Alternate OSD Federal Register Liaison
Officer, Department of Defense.*

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Office of the Secretary

Comments on Department of Defense Intent To Make Decisional Documents of Discharge Review Boards (DRB) and Correction Boards (CB) Available in a Searchable, On-Line Database, and To Discontinue Indexing in Hardcopy Form

AGENCY: Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Program Integration, DoD.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This notice is published to comply with the Electronic Freedom of Information Act Amendments of 1996. The Department of Defense intends to provide on-line access to decisional documents of DRBs and CBs in a computer database, which will be searchable by key words. All decisional documents issued after October 1998 will be available on this searchable on-line database accessible via the Internet. Decisional documents issued prior to October 1998 will not be included in the database, but will continue to be available in microfiche in the DRB/CB reading room. Hard copy indices to these older decisional documents will continue to be available as well. However, the DRB/CB reading room will no longer create and make available to the public hard copy indices for decisional documents issued after October 1998, since these documents will be available and searchable on-line. This notice is to provide interested parties with the opportunity to submit written comments on the proposed changes. Implementation of the proposed changes will require application to the United States District Court for the District of Columbia, since the changes would effect indexing requirements contained in a settlement order issued in *Urban Law Institute of Antioch College, Inc. v. Secretary of Defense*, Civ. No. 76-0530 (D.D.C.) (Stipulation of Dismissal, Jan. 31, 1977) (Order and Settlement Agreement, July 30, 1982).

DATES: Comments are due no later than May 4, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Forward comments to the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel & Readiness, Program Integration, Legal Policy, 4000 Defense

Pentagon, Washington, D.C. 20301-4000.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Lt Col Karen J. Kinlin, OUSD (P&R) PI-LP, 4000 Defense Pentagon, Room 4C763, Washington, D.C. 20301-4000; telephone (703) 697-3387; facsimile (703) 693-6708.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Electronic Freedom of Information Act Amendments of 1996, Pub. L. No. 104-231, 110 Stat. 3048, became effective on October 2, 1996. These amendments required agencies to use electronic information technology to enhance the availability of reading room records. The Amendments embody a strong preference that records be made available on-line whenever possible. To satisfy this requirement, a web-site for the DoD Electronic Reading Room for Corrections and Discharge Review Boards is being created which will contain all decisional documents of the Military Departments' Correction Boards and Discharge Review Boards after October 1998. The web site will include the search engine DocuShare that will allow members of the public to search decisional documents by keyword.

The current hard copy indexing system will still be available for documents prior to October 1998 which will be retained on microfiche. However, at the end of this process, when all the boards have posted their up-to-date decisional documents, the DoD plans to discontinue using the current hard copy index system prescribed in DoD Directive 1332.28, and instead will rely on the web site's search capability. The DocuShare search engine will enable applicants and/or their representatives to find those cases that may be similar to theirs and that indicate the circumstances under which or reasons why the DRB or the Secretary concerned granted or denied relief.

Decisional documents issued prior to October 1998, and not accessible on the web site, would still be available on microfiche in the Armed Forces Discharge Review/Correction Board Reading Room and would retain the old indexing system.

Because the corrections boards also use a hard copy index system, DoD proposes that the proposal to replace the current indexing system with the electronic search engine will also include decisional documents of the Boards for Correction of Military Records. Microfiche correction board documents available in the reading room will continue to be available and will continue to be searchable by means of existing hard copy indices.

We believe the changes outlined above will significantly improve public access to DRB/CB decisional documents, as well as the individual's ability to search for and identify documents of interest to him or her.

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Notice of Proposed Information Collection Requests

AGENCY: Department of Education.

SUMMARY: The Leader, Information Management Group, Office of the Chief Information Officer, invites comments on the proposed information collection requests as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

DATES: Interested persons are invited to submit comments on or before March 6, 2000.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 3506 of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35) requires that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) provide interested Federal agencies and the public an early opportunity to comment on information collection requests. OMB may amend or waive the requirement for public consultation to the extent that public participation in the approval process would defeat the purpose of the information collection, violate State or Federal law, or substantially interfere with any agency's ability to perform its statutory obligations. The Leader, Information Management Group, Office of the Chief Information Officer, publishes that notice containing proposed information collection requests prior to submission of these requests to OMB. Each proposed information collection, grouped by office, contains the following: (1) Type of review requested, e.g. new, revision, extension, existing or reinstatement; (2) Title; (3) Summary of the collection; (4) Description of the need for, and proposed use of, the information; (5) Respondents and frequency of collection; and (6) Reporting and/or Recordkeeping burden. OMB invites public comment.

The Department of Education is especially interested in public comment addressing the following issues: (1) Is this collection necessary to the proper functions of the Department; (2) will this information be processed and used